



AETC News Clips

Laughlin AFB, Texas



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **01 May 06**

SOUND OFF!

Re: Planned housing development Near Laughlin AFB

It saddens me what has come about as far as putting Laughlin AFB at high risk of closing its doors because someone has made a great mistake in choice. If the Mayor and Council who have voted to proceed with this development CARE about the people of Del Rio, then they would go ahead and put this to a vote BY the people. If they continue to try and go around the good citizens of Del Rio, then they are showing their true colors.

If you are a citizen of Del Rio, NOW is the time to take a stand if you are against this outrageous thing that will happen if Del Rio does lose Laughlin AFB.

I guess they can always build a prison out there if Laughlin closes. Then there will be the possibility of wondering when prisoners escape if they might be going through the neighborhood of Mr. Earl's money maker.

I listened to Mr. Earl on this development on Monday morning (April 17) and he acted like he is doing us a favor by building these houses and golf course; well, everyone knows he is out to make a lot of money from this deal, so he doesn't have anyone fooled.

I'd like to hear if there is any truth to the rumors that have been floating around town; about someone getting paid under the table, so to speak and how someone even got a condo in San Antonio out of the deal. Would someone please give us some straight facts about these rumors?

Someone mentioned on the radio also about percentages of people in Del Rio as far as race goes. If you look around this town over 85 percent of the population is Hispanic and the majority of people employed at Laughlin AFB are Hispanic.

I am speaking now to the people of Laughlin AFB and also of Del Rio, which also includes all the businesses of Del Rio, Texas. If you are interested in keeping Laughlin AFB you need to go ASAP to make sure you and your family's and employees have their voter registration cards in order to vote on this when the time comes. The reason I say this is because I approached some people with whom I work with and some said they wanted to sign the petition and to be able to vote if it comes to that but didn't have their voter registration cards.

Please get this taken care of ASAP in order to vote by going to the Val Verde County courthouse and signing up to be a registered voter.

Del Rio News

PAGE:

ISSUE DATE: 01 May 06



AETC News Clips

Laughlin AFB, Texas



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **01 May 06**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Open letter to council members

Editor,

I have reviewed, with a sense of sadness, the news General Gagliardi sent concerning the "BRAC" clouds on the horizon. I wish to send my support to his cogent warning. The time has come for another American town "to bite the bullet." The mistake is easily justified. All a town council has to do is believe it can be watchful and control the growth near a pilot training base. My urgent plea is for you to realize you can't because you really want both - Laughlin and the housing development.

I live in Phoenix now and I am witnessing the anguish of the last few commanders who, even with congressional and DOD support, can't stop the encroachment of large housing developments very near Luke AFB on the west side of Phoenix. Luke AFB operates 24 hours a day and, to meet its training requirements, sends fighters to its Barry Goldwater bombing range every day and most nights. (Yes, they actually bomb and perform fighter tactics at night utilizing star light technology.) This may be the most modern and efficient fighter training base on earth.

Every Luke AFB commander in recent years has had to devote a major effort - pleading with the local town government to stop the encroachment. A few weeks ago, an F-16 lost an engine on takeoff. The pilot ejected and landed safely after about 10 seconds of flight. Of course the developers left plenty of room for his exploding bomb-laden fighter jet to crash and skid right up to the housing development boundary off the end of the runway. Now the homeowners believe they may be living too close to the runway.

The scale of damage in having Luke AFB closed is easily 20 to 1 more critical to DOD than the Laughlin situation . . . and my very sad conviction is that Luke AFB will be strangled to death very soon. As we speak, the current budget atmosphere is driving radically new flight training concepts. If I were a proud member of the Del Rio Town Council, I'd take General Gagliardi's words to the bank.

The BRAC will soon ring the bell to find the precious few locations for Joint Service conventional pilot training bases. You have wise counsel in General Gagliardi. If you want what is arguably the finest

undergraduate pilot training base in the world to be thrown on the BRAC trash heap, the process is simple. All you have to do is believe in your hearts and minds that you can manage the coexistence of a snake and a mongoose.

Sincerely,

Brig. Gen. BUD FARRINGTON, USAF, Ret.
Fountain Hills, Ariz.

Del Rio News

PAGE:

ISSUE DATE: 01 May 06



AETC News Clips

Tyndall AFB, Fla.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 1-May 06

Publication: NewsHerald; Date: 2006 Apr 29; Section: Front page; Page Number: 1A



Search for new boat slips leads to Air Force property

Bay commissioner eyes deal for new marina at fuel depot

By Ed Offley

News Herald Writer 747-5079 / edoffley@pcnh.com

PANAMA CITY

Bay County officials see the abandoned U.S. Air Force fuel depot in Lynn Haven as a solution to a worsening shortage of boat slips and ramp space at local marinas.

In a meeting with Air Force officials earlier this week, Commissioner Mike Thomas raised the concept of building a public boat marina on the depot site, which fronts on both Lynn Haven Bayou and North Bay. Thomas told The News Herald that a shortfall of mooring slips is expected to triple from 200 today to more than 600 in the next few years as several private marinas are redeveloped.

"That property up there would be perfect for a marina," Thomas said. "If people can't get to the water, we're in real trouble here."

Disclosure of the county's interest in a marina came as local officials continued to negotiate with the Air Force over future uses for the World War II-era fuel depot, which the local base has supervised since the 1970s. The 200-acre site for the past five years has been the focus of strong interest by local government agencies and universities seeking to expand public facilities in the area.

The Florida State University-Panama City campus has eyed the depot property for a possible coastal research station and campus extension. Lynn Haven officials have pushed for a rails-to-trails park on the tract, which features 3.7 miles of railroad right of way out to U.S. 231 and State 77.

Success in developing a marina at the depot would go a long way toward healing bruised feelings among local officials caused by the Air Force's Uturn on plans for the depot, Thomas said.

Several local boaters strongly agreed with the need.

"There are definitely more boats on the water," said Bay County resident Jarrid Hood, as he prepared to back his boat trailer with a 16-foot Key Largo into the water at St. Andrews Marina early Friday afternoon. "But parking is the issue — once you've put it the water where can you park your trailer?"

For Hood, the answer was to tow the trailer more than 200 yards from the ramp to a parking slot on the pier while his wife, Karen, held onto their boat with a mooring line.

At the downtown Panama City Marina, where waiting lists for covered boat slips are interminable, former Jacksonville resident Ted Dobric said it has become necessary to launch the family's 20-foot Fisher duck boat earlier and earlier on Fridays to avoid the ramp traffic jam.

"It's getting pretty congested," he said.

Earlier this year, the Air Force dismayed Bay County and Lynn Haven officials when it announced that rather than simply transferring title of the unused depot to Lynn Haven, it now wanted to develop a plan by which the service would lease parts of the site to other government agencies and possible civilian developers. Officials at Tyndall Air Force Base, which formally controlled the site, have turned over planning and negotiations to the Air Force Real Property Agency, a 15-year-old organization established to dispose of bases and other property shut down by the base realignment and closure process.

Tyndall spokeswoman Capt. Elaine Hunnicutt confirmed that the Air Force plans to retain control of the depot and develop it under a "joint-use" concept that would make the site available to both Air

The News Herald

PAGE: Emailed

DATE: 1-May 06



AETC News Clips

Tyndall AFB, Fla.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 1-May 06

Force families and local civilians.

"It's always been considered an Air Force asset (and) we are not preparing to get rid of this asset," Hunnicutt said. "We want something that we can both benefit from," she said, referring to the military and civilian communities.

While expressing his "disappointment" with the Air Force's shift from disposal to leasing the site, Thomas said that he has no problem with the idea of a mixed-use activity. "We could take only 10-15 acres and make a pretty fine marina," he added.

However, **Lynn** Haven and FSU officials earlier this year voiced opposition to leasing land at the **depot** rather than receiving title to the property outright.

Members of the Air Force agency's Enhanced Use Leasing Team told county and **Lynn** Haven officials that they expect to return within 90 days with an initial report determining feasible uses for the land, Hunnicutt said. However, actual redevelopment is still "several years" away as the Air Force continues to clean up contaminated areas on the tract, Hunnicutt said.

"We are still in the assessment stage," Hunnicutt said. "Future use has not been determined at this time."

Brig. Gen. Jack Egginton, commander of the 325th Fighter Wing at Tyndall, said this week that the Air Force does want to coordinate with his civilian counterparts on uses for the **depot**.

"We are working with the officials downtown to determine the best way to utilize this asset," Egginton said.

As they prepared for an afternoon of fishing out near Shell Island, Bay County residents Greg Barron and Justin Leake said they were unaware of the debate over the **depot**, but added that the county has a real need for expanding its marina facilities.

"There are a lot of new developments without any boat ramps," Leake said as he inspected the Polar 19-footer the pair were preparing to launch at the downtown marina.

Barron agreed. "Take St. Andrews," he said. "That's a huge marina but you can only put one boat in the water at a time."

The News Herald

PAGE: Emailed

DATE: 1-May 06

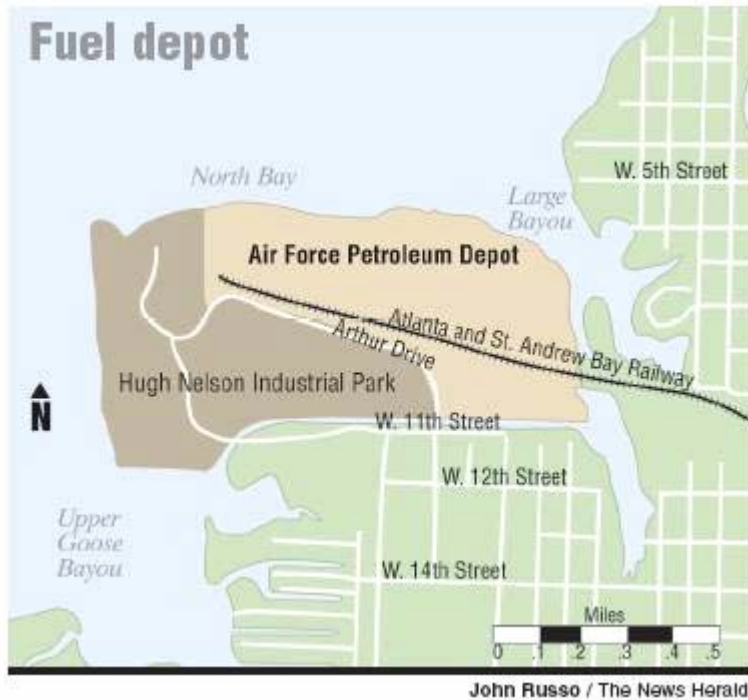


AETC News Clips

Tyndall AFB, Fla.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 1-May 06



The News Herald

PAGE: Emailed

DATE: 1-May 06



AETC News Clips

Tyndall AFB, Fla.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 1-May 06



Andrew Wardlow / The News Herald

Karen Hood watches as her husband, Jarrid, launches their boat at the St. Andrews Marina on Friday.

The News Herald

PAGE: Emailed

DATE: 1-May 06



AETC News Clips

Tyndall AFB, Fla.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 1-May 06



Andrew Wardlow / The News Herald

Neil Sullivan gets his boat ready to launch amid a line of boat trailers Friday at the Panama City Marina.

The News Herald

PAGE: Emailed

DATE: 1-May 06